

REMARKS

Claims 4-6 are pending. Claims 1-3 were canceled. New claim 6 includes some, but not all, of the limitations of original claims 1-3.

Request to initial "Information Disclosure Statement by Applicant"

The copy of the Information Disclosure Statement by Applicant that accompanied the outstanding Office Action was not initialed by the Examiner. Applicants request that the Examiner provide an initialed copy of this document.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,946,820 (Ishii et al.), hereafter, "Ishii." Applicants traverse this rejection as it applies to claims 4-6.

1. Patentability of claim 4 over Ishii

Claim 4 recites, in part (underlining added for emphasis):

said control circuit is configured to...select an OFF state other than said kth OFF state when said kth output DC voltage exceeds a predetermined upper limit value

This limitation is not disclosed or suggested in Ishii. In the outstanding rejection, the Examiner refers to Embodiment 2 of Ishii (Figs. 4-6 and column 8, line 54 through column 12, line 56) as allegedly disclosing these limitations.

Applicants have carefully reviewed Embodiment 2 of Ishii and cannot locate any disclosure related to the above-highlighted limitation, or even any disclosure wherein a determination is made that a DC voltage exceeds a predetermined upper limit value. Accordingly, claim 4 is believed to be patentable over Ishii.

2. Patentability of claim 6 over Ishii

Claim 6 recites, in part (underlining added for emphasis):

said control circuit is configured to...shift said kth OFF state to said ON state after the release of said magnetic energy stored in said inductor to said kth output circuit is completed, and the switching cycle of said switching circuit or the period from said first to nth OFF state is not smaller than a predetermined value

Neither of the above-identified underlined limitations are disclosed or suggested in Ishii. In the outstanding rejection, the Examiner also refers to Embodiment 2 (Figs. 4-6 and column 8, line 54 through column 12, line 56) of Ishii as allegedly disclosing these limitations.

Regarding the first highlighted limitation, Ishii describes releasing magnetic energy stored in an inductor for charging a capacitor that serves as a smoothing means (column 10, lines 25-28 and 60-62; column 11, lines 22-25 and 57-60). However, Ishii does not describe that after such a release, a “kth OFF state is shifted to an ON” state,” as required by claim 6.

Regarding the second highlighted limitation, Ishii does not disclose that the switching cycle of the switching circuit is “not smaller than a predetermined value,” or that the period from the first to nth OFF state is “not smaller than a predetermined value.” Accordingly, claim 6 is believed to be patentable over Ishii.

3. Patentability of dependent claim 5 over Ishii

This claim is believed to be patentable over Ishii for at least the reason that it is dependent upon an allowable base claim and because it recites additional patentable limitations.

Conclusion

Insofar as the Examiner's objections and rejections were fully addressed, the instant application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowability of all pending claims is therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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(Date)

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